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Musto meets with EPA, DER on Foster lead

By NADIA PUHAK
Standard-Speaker Staff Writer

Two environmental agencies and a local state senator are keeping in constant communication to solve the problem of lead contamination in Foster Township.

State Sen. Raphael Musto, D-14th, met with officials from the federal Environmental Protection Agency and the state Department of Environmental Resources last Friday to discuss results of soil and water tests taken at the C & D Recycling Plant in Pond Creek.

While no conclusions were reached, the groups agreed to keep in touch and eventually determine the cause of the lead problems that have been plaguing Foster Township residents for the past several months.

"I requested the meeting to be briefed by the two agencies so that we could have a preview of their test results," Musto said. The senator also said he would like to have a similar meeting but include Foster Township officials within the next two weeks.

Tests were taken on and near the plant after several area residents expressed a concern about high lead levels in their drinking water supplies. Both agencies were called to the site to do analysis of soil and water to determine any contamination

tion and to recommend site remediation.

Musto noted that while the DER has several preliminary samples already available, the EPA is still waiting for test results from its laboratories.

The senator said he will meet with the officials later this week to delve into any of the sketchy results already gathered so that they can assess how big the problem really is.

Emil Evancho, a Foster Township supervisor, said he and the other supervisors would like to be informed about what is happening with the test results.

"They haven't told me anything," Evancho said. "I know they met and are going to discuss their findings on the tests they did. I would just like to know more about it."

Evancho said he believes the supervisors should be kept up to date on what happens in the township so they can answer questions asked by area residents. Musto agreed, saying that is the reason he recommended a meeting with local, state and federal officials.

DER officials who attended the meeting were James Chester, regional director; Bill McDonnell, solid waste management bureau; and Mark Carmon, public relations coordinator. Don Welsh, the EPA's congressional liaison, went to the meeting to hear DER statistics and

to tell the senator what his department is doing.

Nanci Sinclair, public relations director for the EPA, said Welsh told the senator he would inform him when the EPA results from the site are concluded. Welsh said that, after an indepth analysis, the EPA will decide if the property qualifies to be a Superfund site, which would use federal money to clean up the contamination.

Carmon said the representatives from his office told Musto they have some results, but have not made any conclusions yet.

"We have a few raw results, but we still have some questions about the relationship of the site and the area around it," Carmon said. "We are still in the process of continuing the investigation."

The two offices agreed to work out the problem together so that time can be saved in alleviating the soil and water problems in the township.

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